

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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R 261907Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9664

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PFOR, UY

SUBJECT: SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION: A BOOST FOR THE BORDABERRY
REGIME

1. SUMMARY. URUGUAY'S SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION BROUGHT AN
OUTPOURING OF FEELING AND A MASSIVE (SOME QUARTER OF A MILLION
PEOPLE) DEMONSTRATION OF SPONTANEOUS SUPPORT FOR THE BORDABERRY
ADMINISTRATION. THE PRESIDENT, NORMALLY A RATHER DULL SPEAKER,
REACTED EMOTIONALLY TO THE CROWD'S SUPPORT TO GIVE ONE OF HIS
LIVELIER PERFORMANCES ON A PUBLIC ROSTRUM. AT AN EVENING RECEPTION
AT THE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE, THE AMBASSADOR FOUND A PRESIDENT,
MINISTERS AND MILITARY LEADERS BOUYED BY WHAT THEY (JUSTLY IN THE
OPINION OF DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS) SAW AS SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATION
OF CONFIDENCE FOR WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO DO. DESPITE
THE EMOTIONS EVOKED, THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF CHANGES IN EITHER
DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN POLICY. IN FACT, THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH WAS A
STRONG RE-AFFIRMATION OF THE PRO-DEVELOPMENT, ANTI-COMMUNIST POL-
ICIES OF HIS ADMINISTRATION TO DATE. AND THE PUBLIC REACTION COULD
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HAVE DONE NOTHING BUT CONVINCE THE NATION'S LEADERS THAT THEY WERE

EMBARKED

ON A COURSE SUPPORTED BY THE MAN IN THE STREET. END SUMMARY.

2. URUGUAY CELEBRATED 150 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE ON AUGUST 25 WITH A LARGE CIVIC-MILITARY PARADE FOLLOWED BY PRESIDENT BORDABERRY'S FIRST MAJOR ADDRESS IN THE STREETS OF MONTEVIDEO SINCE ASSUMING OFFICE MORE THAN THREE YEARS AGO. THE PARADE FEATURED NOT ONLY SCHOOL GROUPS AND URUGUAYAN MILITARY UNITS, BUT ALSO MILITARY ACADEMY CONTINGENTS FROM ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, BOLIVIA, CHILE AND PARAGUAY. AIR FORCE UNITS FROM ARGENTIAN AND BRAZIL JOINED IN OVER-FLYING THE PARADE ROUTE AND ARGENTINA ALSO SENT A DESTROYER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CELEBRATION.

3. FOLLOWING THE PARADE WHICH FEATURED ANCIENT BUT METICULOUSLY MAINTAINED MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SPRUCELY ATTIRED TROOPS, THE PRESIDENT WALKED SOME THREE BLOCKS FROM THE RECEIVING STAND TO THE PLAZA INDEPENDENCIA WHERE HE ADDRESSED THE NATION. AS HE WALKED THE CROWDS FLOWED INTO THE STREET TO FOLLOW HIM, A BOUYANT CROWD OF AN ESTIMATED QUARTER OF A MILLION PEOPLE.

4. BORDABERRY'S SPEECH (FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED) CONTAINED NOTHING WHICH WOULD INDICATE A CHANGE IN WHAT HAS BEEN REPORTED PREVIOUSLY WITH RESPECT TO EITHER DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN POLICY. THE RECURRING THEME IN THIS, AS IN PREVIOUS SPEECHES, WAS HIS REFERENCE TO URUGUAY'S REJECTION OF "THE CRIMES OF FOREIGN SEDITION AND ITS REACTION AGAINST DEMAGOGUERY AND POLITICAL CORRUPTION". HE TOUCHED ALREADY FAMILIAR CHORDS, STATING THAT "DEMOCRACY IS NOTHING OTHER THAN ABSOLUTE RESPECT FOR THE HUMAN BEING WITH ALL ITS ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES: INALIENABLE PERSONAL DESTINY, FREEDOM TO REACH IT, DIGNITY, EQUALITY OF ALL SORTS, EQUALITY OF JUSTICE AND BEFORE THE LAW." HE ASKED RHETORICALLY WHETHER A MAN WHO CANNOT SEND HIS CHILDREN TO SCHOOL WITHOUT THEIR BEING INDOCTRINATED IN COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY WAS FREE, WHETHER THE WORKER WHO NEEDED WORK AND WHO WANTED TO WORK BUT WHO HAD TO STRIKE UNDER THREATS WAS FREE, ETC.

5. DESCRIBING THE SITUATION OF THE NATION IN JUNE 1973 AS "ON THE BORDER OF CHAOS AND DISSOLUTION," BORDABERRY SAID THAT HE AND THE ARMED FORCES, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE POPULACE, HAD FIRST TO PRO-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VIDE SECURITY SO THAT PEOPLE COULD LIVE TOGETHER UNDER LAW, A NECESSARY PRECONDITION FOR DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, HE ADDED, DEVELOPMENT FOR GENERAL WELFARE IS NOT THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT. "WE WANT TO REAFFIRM THE SPIRITUAL VALUES OF THE NATION AND OF ITS PEOPLE SO THEY MIGHT BE CAPABLE OF DEFEATING COMMUNIST AGGRESSION IN ITS ORIGINS, THAT IS TO SAY, WHEN IT SEEKS TO PENETRATE THE PERSONALITY OF EACH OF US." THE TASK, SAID THE PRESIDENT, "...IT NOT A PROCESS OF ONE DAY." URUGUAY, AS IT PASSES

ITS 150TH BIRTHDAY IS BEING REBORN AND IT WILL NOT RETURN TO THE DIVISIONIST POLITICAL PRACTICES OF THE PAST.

6. THE ONLY REMARKS OPENLY DIRECTED TOWARDS THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE CAME IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH. "THIS WILL NOT BE AN EASY TASK (BUILDING A NEW NATIONAL UNITY BASED ON TRADITIONAL VALUES). WITH THE ARMS OF WAR AND VIOLENCE AND WITH THE MORAL DISSOLUTION OF WESTERN SOCIETIES, MARXISM ADVANCES IN THE WORLD TODAY, INFILTRATING EVEN THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH THEY ATTACK THOSE WHO HAVE THE ABILITY TO OPPOSE THEM. IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY IT (MARXISM) SPILLS INNOCENT BLOOD IN COUNTRIES WHICH, WHEN THEY FINALLY SUCCUMB, FALL THEN INTO THE OMINOUS SILENCE OF THOSE WHO REALLY HAVE LOST."

7. COMMENT. THERE IS NO DOUBT BUT THAT THE OUTPOURING OF PEOPLE WAS SPONTANEOUS. HERE THERE WERE NO PLACARDS, NO UNIONS OR OTHER GROUPS ORDERED TO SUPPORT THE DAY'S EVENTS, NO TRUCKLOADS OF CAMESINOS BROUGHT INTO THE CAPITAL FOR A SHOW. BETWEEN TWO AND THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND ENTHUSIASTIC PATRIOTICALLY-INSPIRED URUGUAYANS, LARGELY FAMILIES, FILLED THE STREETS AND CHEERED THEIR PRESIDENT. BORDABERRY HIMSELF WAS BOUYED BY THEIR MOOD. THE PRESIDENT, NO MORE THAN A MEDIOCRE POLITICAL SPEAKER, PICKED UP THE SPONTANEITY OF THE CROWDS AND GAVE A TONE OF EMOTIONAL FEVER TO HIS REMARKS. THIS FEELING OF BOUYANCY CARRIED OVER INTO AN EVENING RECEPTION WHICH THAT AMBASSADOR ATTENDED AT THE PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE. IT WAS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE NATION'S LEADERS NOT ONLY CONVINCED THAT THE PUBLIC HAD DEMONSTRATED ITS ENDORSEMENT FOR WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO DO. THE PRESIDENT TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT WHILE THE MILITARY HAD BEEN CONCERNED OVER HOW THE PUBLIC WOULD REACT, HE (BORDABERRY) WAS NOT. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS BUT ONE MAN AND WHATEVER HAPPENED HE WAS STILL BUT ONE MAN. HOWEVER, THE MILITARY WAS CONCERNED OVER THE FUTURE IMPACT ON THE WHOLE MILITARY INSTITUTION. AIR FORCE CINC BRIG. GEN. PALADINI LATER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONFIRMED THIS TO THE AMBASSADOR, COMMENTING THAT THEY, THE MILITARY, HAD BEEN CONCERNED OVER HOW THE PUBLIC WOULD REACT (OR NOT REACT) TO AN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION OF THIS KIND (IT PREVIOUSLY MOUNTED TO LITTLE MORE THAN A DAY OFF FOR WORKERS). THE PRESIDENT, SAID PALADINI, HAD BEEN RIGHT.

8. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT BUT THAT THE PUBLIC DID SHOW ITS SUPPORT FOR WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO DO. A RECENT GALLUP POLL SO INDICATED, AS HAD PREVIOUS POLLS SINCE JUNE 1973. NEVERTHELESS, SOME SKEPTICISM WAS USUALLY EXPRESSED ABOUT THE POLLS' RESULTS. NO ONE, HOWEVER, COULD MISREAD THE FEELINGS OF URUGUAYANS ON AUGUST 25. NOR DID BORDABERRY GIVE THE LEAST HINT OF A CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT POLICY. HE STATED CLEARLY ONCE AGAIN THAT THE NATION WOULD NOT RETURN TO THE POLITICS OF THE PAST AND IMPLIED ONCE AGAIN THAT THE TIMING OF ELECTIONS WAS OF LESS IMPORTANCE THAN

COMPLETING THE TASK ON WHICH THE NATION EMBARKED. WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN POLICY, TOO, THE SPEECH WAS A RESTATEMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S FIRM ANTI-COMMUNIST POSTURE. IN SUMMARY, THE DAY BOILED DOWN TO A REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH IN THE NATION, SUPPORT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND ENDURING ANTI-COMMUNISM IN BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY.

9. GDS.
SIRACUSA

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MONTEV02948
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750295-1070
From: MONTEVIDEO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750818/aaaaapkh.tel
Line Count: 173
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <04 DEC 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION: A BOOST FOR THE BORDABERRY REGIME
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PFOR, UY, (BORDABERRY AROCENA, JUAN MARIA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006